



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
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Hazard Tree Removal Along Highway 230 to Cause Some Recreation Impacts

(LARAMIE, WY. - December 20, 2011) – The cutting and removal of dead and dying trees near Wyoming Highway 230 between Woods Landing, Wyo. and the Colorado border has begun and National Forest visitors recreating in the area this winter should take note. Several snowmobile and cross country skiing trails on the Laramie Ranger District (LRD) of the Medicine Bow National Forest will be affected by the work, but the overall impact of the work on public recreation access will be minimal.

Snowmobilers may encounter periodic crossings for logging equipment along the portion of the 'T' trail that parallels Highway 230 between Wold/Tics Recreation Fee Parking Lot and the Mountain Home/WyColo Lodge area. Similar crossings or trail reroutes can also be expected on the southernmost portion of the 'R' trail in the Mountain Home/WyColo Lodge area.

Forest visitors who use the Chimney Park Cross Country Ski Trails will also be affected by tree removal work from the 'A' to the 'G' trail junctions of the Woods Creek Loop. That stretch of trail will not be groomed by the Forest Service until work in the area is complete. Trail users are also reminded that the parking lot will be closed for a short time when logging occurs adjacent to the lot and toilet. Visitors should note that most of the Chimney Park trails will remain unaffected by logging operations, but caution should still be exercised when recreating around active timber sale areas.

Visitors to the southern portion of the Snowy Range should be aware that the tree removal along the highway is a very active program of work. Access and recreational opportunities will likely be limited at times. When recreation trails will be affected by this work, signing and flagging will be used to inform the public of any reroutes or temporary closures. Visitors may also encounter logging machinery in contract areas and log trucks along Forest Roads and State Highways. Do not enter areas which are posted closed, as they are closed for public safety.

"If an active logging operation is encountered, it is important for visitors to use caution but keep moving," said Kim Hanson, Timber Sale Administrator for the Laramie Ranger District. People unknowingly create a hazardous situation when they stop and watch logging operations."

Work will generally be accomplished during weekdays; however, some work may occur on weekends and holidays. These operations may cause a temporary inconvenience for visitors, but they are essential to maintain long-term access and public safety.

Work is being done to clear dead and dying trees that could impact the highway as well as trees that could damage the highway right-of-way fence. A damaged fence poses the danger of cattle getting loose on the roadway. Beetle-killed trees that are at risk of falling due to rotting roots are becoming a safety hazard to forest and highway users alike. Work will continue through the winter until spring conditions become too wet. Work is anticipated to resume in the fall of 2012. This project is being done in partnership between the Medicine Bow National Forest and the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

It is important for visitors to be aware that the mountain pine beetle epidemic has increased the risk of falling trees. Trees impacted by the beetles appear red or have no needles. Green trees left after fuels reduction or hazard tree removal treatments are also susceptible to blowing over due to removal of the trees around them. Remember to look up, look down and look around before setting up camps or parking vehicles under dead trees. Please be aware of your surroundings while visiting areas affected by the epidemic and be prepared to leave quickly if winds kick up.

Please call the LRD at 307-745-2300 to inquire about current conditions and to check the status of work in the area you plan to visit.

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